

**IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF PENNSYLVANIA**

American Frame Corporation
400 Tomahawk Drive
Maumee, OH 43537

Plaintiff,

v.

American Picture Framing, Inc.
3821 Powelton Avenue
Philadelphia, PA 19104-5105

Defendant.

CIVIL ACTION NO.

JURY TRIAL DEMANDED

COMPLAINT

This is an action for trademark infringement, unfair competition, false designation of origin, and unjust enrichment.

PARTIES

1. Plaintiff, American Frame Corporation, is an Ohio corporation (hereafter "American Frame" or "Plaintiff") located at 400 Tomahawk Drive, Maumee, OH 43537.

2. Upon information and belief, Defendant American Picture Framing, Inc. is a Pennsylvania corporation (hereafter "Defendant," or "American Picture") which is located at 3821 Powelton Avenue, Philadelphia, PA 19104.

JURISDICTION AND VENUE

3. This action arises under the trademark laws of the United States, 15 U.S.C. § 1051 et seq. It also arises under principles of state common and statutory law. Federal question jurisdiction is conferred pursuant to 15 U.S.C. § 1121 and 28 U.S.C. §§ 1331 and 1338.

4. This Court has supplemental jurisdiction over the claims brought under state statutory and common law pursuant to 28 U.S.C. §§ 1338(b) and 1367.

5. This Court has personal jurisdiction over American Picture because, upon information and belief, American Picture, *inter alia*, transacts business in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, engages in a persistent course of conduct in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, and expects, or reasonably should expect, their acts to have legal consequences in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

6. Venue is proper in the Eastern District of Pennsylvania (the “District”) pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1391.

FACT COMMON TO ALL COUNTS

7. American Frame is one of the leading suppliers of custom picture frames, mat boards, picture framing supplies and fine art printing. American Frame’s current product line includes a variety of metal and wood frames, canvas, fine art and photo paper.

8. American Frame has used the “AMERICAN®” trademark in commerce in the United States since at least as early as 1983.

9. American Frame owns the following valid, incontestable and subsisting registration on the Principal Register of the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office:

Trademark	Registration No.	Goods
"AMERICAN"	1,421,940	International Class 20: Picture Frames

A copy of the Certificate of Registration is attached as Exhibit A.

10. American Frame has conducted extensive advertising, marketing and promotion of its "AMERICAN" trademark.

11. By and through nearly thirty (30) years of sales, offering of services, and promotional activities, and in view of the multitude of customers that have utilized American Frame's goods and services, American Frame's "AMERICAN" trademark, trade name and service mark are famous.

12. American Frame is the owner of the domain name "AMERICANFRAME.COM" and has operated a website at that address since at least as early as 1996 through which it sells custom picture frames, mat board, art and photo printing and picture framing supplies

13. Attached hereto as Exhibit B are pages from American Frame's web site at "AMERICANFRAME.COM". As seen in the attached Exhibit A, American Frame promotes its goods and services prominently displaying and emphasizing the "AMERICAN" trademark, trade name and service mark.

14. American Frame's use of "AMERICAN" in connection with its goods and services is unique to it, and is arbitrary and has no recognized meaning in the field of picture frames except as designating American Frame as the source of its goods.

15. As a result of the above, American Frame has acquired substantial valuable goodwill symbolized by and embodied in its AMERICAN® Trademark.

Defendant's Infringement

16. Notwithstanding American Frame's well-known and prior common law and statutory rights in its "AMERICAN" mark, and with at least constructive notice of American Frame's federal registration under 15 U.S.C. § 1072, American Picture has, upon information and belief, adopted and used the mark "AMERICAN" in conjunction with picture frames in the United States without the authorization of American Frame.

17. American Picture's usage of the mark "AMERICAN" has caused American Frame grievous injury.

18. Upon information and belief, American Picture has, without authorization, used the AMERICAN trademark at their Philadelphia, Pennsylvania location and web site located at www.americanpictureframing.com.

19. As a result of American Picture's acts complained of herein, members of the public and the trade are likely to believe that American Picture's frames originate from, or is offered in affiliation with, or sponsored by, or under license from or rendered with the approval of American Frame.

20. American Picture's use of the infringing trademark represents to American Frame's clientele and potential clientele as well as to the trade and the public that American Picture operates under the sponsorship or in affiliation with, with a license from or with the approval of American Frame.

21. Persons, including potential customers, familiar with American Frame's "AMERICAN®" mark, on seeing American Picture's usage of "AMERICAN", would be likely to believe and would be justified in so believing that American Picture's usage was under the sponsorship of or in affiliation with American Frame, or that American Frame had approved such usage.

22. American Picture's acts complained of herein are likely to cause and/or have caused confusion, subliminal confusion, mistake or deception among the trade or public.

23. On information and belief, American Picture's infringement complained herein has continued after American Picture's actual knowledge of Plaintiff and its rights in the "AMERICAN" mark, and has been willful and deliberate and represents an attempt to appropriate to American Picture the goodwill that American Frame has earned for its trademark in order to give to American Picture a recognition and advantage in the marketplace which American Picture would not otherwise possess.

24. American Frame's valuable goodwill with respect to its AMERICAN® trademark may be irreparably damaged by the acts of American Picture.

25. American Picture's adoption and use of its infringing AMERICAN® mark, in connection was and is:

(a) With full knowledge of American Frame's AMERICAN® trademark, and

(b) Was and is with the intent and for the purpose, and has had the effect, of wrongfully infringing upon American Frame's AMERICAN® trademark.

26. By trading upon the goodwill of American Frame's AMERICAN® trademark American Picture has obtained for its goods a salability which they would not have otherwise had.

27. All such conduct by American Picture was and continues to be in bad faith, willful, deliberate and in knowing violation of the law.

28. The activities of American Picture complained of herein have caused, and unless restrained and enjoined by the Court will continue to cause, irreparable harm, damage and injury.

29. Upon information and belief, American Picture will continue its tortious acts including its infringement and unfair competition unless restrained by this Court.

COUNT I

STATUTORY TRADEMARK INFRINGEMENT

30. The allegations of paragraphs 1 through 29 are incorporated herein by reference as though fully set forth herein.

31. American Picture's use of its infringing AMERICAN mark in connection with American Picture's picture frames as well as in connection with American Picture's promotion, offering and sale of the same, is an infringement of American Frame's AMERICAN® trademark registration, all in violation of § 32 of the Lanham Act, 15 U.S.C. 1114.

32. American Frame has no control over the quality of goods which are provided, promoted, advertised and sold by American Picture, with the result that American Frame's valuable goodwill with respect to its trademark may be irreparably injured by the acts of American Picture complained of herein.

33. As a result of said trademark infringement, American Frame has suffered and continues to suffer irreparable injury, for which it has no adequate remedy at law.

COUNT II

FEDERAL UNFAIR COMPETITION AND FALSE DESIGNATION OF ORIGIN

34. The allegations of paragraphs 1 through 33 are incorporated herein by reference as though fully set forth herein.

35. This cause of action arises under the trademark laws of the United States, 15 U.S.C. 1125(a).

36. American Picture has adopted and is now using a colorable imitation of American Frame's AMERICAN® trademark for goods which are substantially similar to those offered by American Frame.

37. American Picture's use of a colorable imitation of American Frame's AMERICAN® trademark in connection with American Picture's picture frames will cause customers, potential customers and past customers to mistakenly attribute the properties and reputation of American Frame's picture frames to those of the American Picture.

38. The use by American Picture of its infringing AMERICAN mark in connection with picture frames, and to advertise and promote American Picture's picture frames, constitutes unfair competition, a false description and representation and a false designation of the origin of American Picture's picture frames, all in violation of Section 43(a) of the Lanham Act, 15 U.S.C. 1125(a).

39. As a result of said unfair competition and false designation of origin, American Frame has suffered and continues to suffer irreparable injury, for which it has no adequate remedy at law.

COUNT III

COMMON LAW SERVICE MARK INFRINGEMENT

40. The allegations of paragraphs 1 through 39 are incorporated herein by reference as though fully set forth herein.

41. This cause of action arises under the common law.

42. American Picture's aforementioned conduct constitutes common law trademark infringement.

43. As a result of said infringement, American Frame has suffered and continues to suffer serious and substantial injury, including irreparable injury, for which it has no remedy at law.

COUNT IV

UNFAIR COMPETITION

44. The allegations of paragraphs 1 through 43 are incorporated herein by reference as though fully set forth herein.

45. This cause of action arises under the common law.

46. American Picture's aforementioned conduct constitutes unfair competition.

47. By means and as a result of said unfair competition, American Frame has suffered and continues to suffer serious and substantial injury, including irreparable injury for which it has no adequate remedy at law.

COUNT V

UNJUST ENRICHMENT

48. The allegations of paragraphs 1 through 47 are incorporated herein by reference.

49. This cause of action arises under the common law.

50. By the acts and activities complained of herein, American Picture has been unjustly enriched.

PRAYERS FOR RELIEF

WHEREFORE, PLAINTIFF PRAYS FOR RELIEF from the actions and conduct of Defendant as follows:

1. That Defendant, its agents, officers, sales representatives, servants, employees, associates, attorneys, successors and assignees, and any and all persons or entities acting by, through, under or in active concert or in participation with any or all of them, be enjoined preliminarily and permanently by Order of this Court from doing, abiding, causing or abetting any of the following:

A. directly or indirectly infringing Plaintiff's AMERICAN® trademark;

B. from passing off, inducing or enabling others to sell or pass off any goods provided by Defendant as originating from Plaintiff, which are not Plaintiff's goods or are not rendered by or under the control or supervision of Plaintiff and approved by Plaintiff;

C. directly or indirectly engaging in any acts or activities calculated to trade upon and/or dilute and/or tarnish Plaintiff's AMERICAN® trademark, and/or the reputation or goodwill of Plaintiff, or in any manner to compete with Plaintiff unfairly;

D. using in the sale, offering for sale, promotion, advertising, marketing and/or distribution of its goods or services the mark AMERICAN® trademark, or any mark which is a variant of, simulates, imitates, is substantially similar to, or is confusingly similar to, Plaintiff's AMERICAN® trademark in such a

manner as to deceive, or to falsely describe or represent the source of the goods or otherwise create confusion upon the purchasing public or the trade;

E. further violating Plaintiff's property rights and goodwill; and

F. from otherwise competing unfairly with Plaintiff in any manner whatsoever.

2. That Defendant be required to deliver up to Plaintiff for destruction, all promotional materials, advertisements, manuals, packaging, labeling and other communications to the public in the possession or under its control bearing thereon any material or representations that are or may be false or misleading concerning the source of origin of the goods offered by Defendant.

3. That Defendant take all necessary and appropriate steps to recall for destruction all advertising and other materials and equipment, bearing the Defendant's AMERICAN mark or any variant, colorable imitation, simulation, copy, imitation or counterfeit of Plaintiff's AMERICAN® trademark and that Defendant be required to remove such infringing marks from its promotional materials, advertisements, other documents, in any media and its machinery and equipment.

4. That Defendant be required to pay over to Plaintiff all profits realized by it from its unlawful acts complained of herein.

5. That Defendant be directed to pay over to Plaintiff all damages suffered by Plaintiff as a result of Defendant's acts herein complained of, and that such damages be trebled.

6. That the award of Plaintiff damages and Defendant' profits be trebled as a result of Defendant's willful and deliberate infringement of Plaintiff's trade name and service mark rights.

7. That Plaintiff be awarded punitive damages for the willful and deliberate acts of unfair competition and other unlawful injurious acts of Defendant complained of herein.

8. That Plaintiff be awarded its reasonable attorneys' fees and the cost of this action in view of Defendant's willful and deliberate violation of Plaintiff's rights.

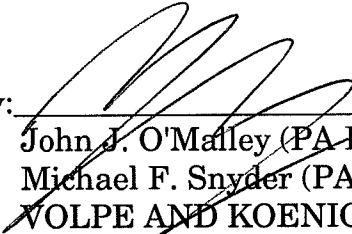
9. That Plaintiff be awarded such other relief as this Court deems just and proper.

JURY DEMAND

Plaintiff demands trial by a jury on all claims to which it is entitled.

Date: December 13, 2012

By: _____


John J. O'Malley (PA I.D. # 68,222)
Michael F. Snyder (PA I.D. # 76,386)
~~VOLPE AND KOENIG, P.C.~~
United Plaza
30 S. 17th Street
Philadelphia, Pa 19103

*Attorneys for Plaintiff,
American Frame Corporation*

EXHIBIT A

Int. Cl.: 20

Prior U.S. Cl.: 32

United States Patent and Trademark Office

Reg. No. 1,421,940

Registered Dec. 23, 1986

**TRADEMARK
PRINCIPAL REGISTER**

AMERICAN

AMERICAN FRAME CORPORATION (OHIO
CORPORATION)
1340 TOMAHAWK DR.
MAUMEE, OH 43537


FIRST USE 8-20-1983; IN COMMERCE
8-20-1983.

SER. NO. 445,776, FILED 9-29-1983.

FOR: PICTURE FRAMES, IN CLASS 20 (U.S.
CL. 32).


HENRY S. ZAK, EXAMINING ATTORNEY

EXHIBIT B



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- Frame Spacers

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American Frame Art Gallery:
Featured Artist – Karl Coughtry

Karl Coughtry:
Originally from upstate New York, now



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living in Minden, Nevada near Carson City, Karl Coughtry has been practicing photography for twenty years. With an emphasis on what can be achieved with natural light, he deliberately shies away from trendy techniques and subjects, preferring to keep the focus on his own innovations and innate passions. Drawn to nature and still lifes, after digital photography became available Coughtry realized he had a unique perspective on color and composition and became particularly interested in supersaturated colors. [Read more »](#)



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Matt Mickel, Dana Dunbar, Ron Mickel, Laura Jajko

Welcome to AmericanFrame.com and thank you for letting me tell you about our company.

For nearly 40 years, we've been a leading supplier of **custom picture frames**, **mat boards**, **picture framing supplies** and **fine art printing**. Browse our wide selection of **Nielsen metals**, solid woods, and all the tools and accessories that make custom DIY framing easy and enjoyable. Every order custom handled with care, and **Shipped Free** over \$75 within 1-2 business days to your studio, home or business. To stay connected, sign up for our **E-Tip Newsletter** and join our online communities on Facebook & Twitter. Need samples? Request them for Free! Questions? Contact **Customer Service** or **Ask Mike!** Love your art. Frame it Right with AmericanFrame.com!

Here is our story.

Back in the 1960's, my father, **Ron Mickel**, opened a small hardware store in Toledo, OH where in addition to paint and garden products, he offered a custom picture framing service. Very quickly, he became known locally for his design sensibilities, beautiful craftsmanship, fair prices and of course, excellent service. Growing up, his store was walking distance from our house so my brothers, sister and I would often hang out and "help" – at least that's what he made us believe...and that was our introduction to framing.

Later, in the early 70's, **Nielsen®** created an aluminum frame that could be custom-cut like solid wood, and Dad saw the potential for serving customers outside the Toledo area. He always wanted to be in the "mail order" business and thought he would market frames in pairs, like stretcher bars, via magazine publications. So he put an ad in 'American Artist', and basically forgot about it, until the post office called him and asked, "Mr. Mickel, will you please pick up your mail?" His PO Box was filled with orders, the largest being from the Chico State University Art Department. I remember this being a very exciting time in our family as this new business took off. We all got busy and really went to work! My first job was filing the ends of the frames and assembling hardware packages.

Looking back, it was crazy. Little did we know he had created a new industry, transforming what was once an expensive "professionals only" task to an easy and affordable "do-it-yourself" project for all types of picture framers- artists, photographers and DIY Decorators.

Today, we are a much larger organization, centrally located in Maumee, OH and after 40 years, quality, craftsmanship, service and affordability remain our watchwords. We are here to help you frame your art right whether that means right in style, right on price, right in quality or right on time!

The American Frame website is designed to take the guesswork out of measuring and visualizing your frame treatment - we do the **math** and show your selections step by step, regardless of skill level. Novice framers can easily learn picture framing via our full color **DIY Framing FunDaMentals booklet** and online instructional videos. Experienced framers may enjoy our **QuickShop** interface, a simple 3-click online purchasing option. If its volume framing you need, we can easily help there too with over 20 years of fulfilling retail business needs.

As many of you will want to reproduce and **print your art & photography**, we've built a fine art printing department, staffed with experts educated in their craft and equipped with the latest Epson giclee printing technology. You can trust them to faithfully reproduce your work on a selection of fine art papers or canvas.

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Laura Jajko
lauraj@americanframe.com

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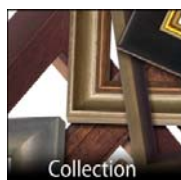
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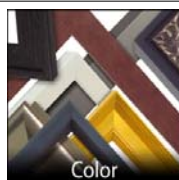
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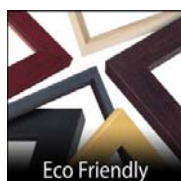
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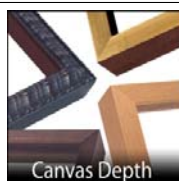
Black

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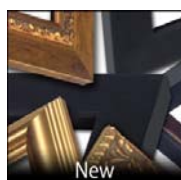
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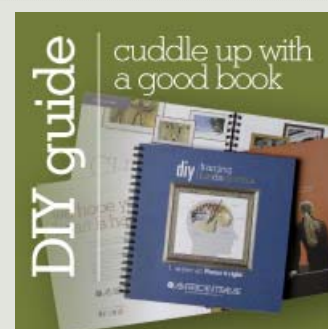
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Whether your photo needs minor retouching or more intensive file corrections, American Frame can help.

Free image retouching includes removal of red eye, time/date stamps, contrast and color balance. Pricing for more detailed file correction can be found and selected on the Options tab in the print work flow.



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Ensure the most accurate color

American Frame offers a variety of canvas, fine art and photo paper options.

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Standard Stretch



Museum Wrap



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Unstretched

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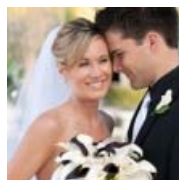
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